

Message Text

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ACTION EUR-12

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CU-02 SAJ-01 EB-07 COME-00 TRSE-00

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INFO AMEMBASSY BELGRADE

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USMISSION BERLIN

AMEMBASSY BUCHAREST

AMEMBASSY BUDAPEST

AMCONSUL LENINGRAD

AMEMBASSY LONDON

AMCONSUL MUNICH

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E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: PFOR, UR,US

SUBJECT: VISIT OF U.S. GOVERNORS TO USSR - WRAP-UP

REF: MOSCOW 7394

1. SUMMARY: A DELEGATION OF EIGHT U.S. GOVERNORS VISITED THE USSR FROM MAY 18 TO 29 UNDER THE U.S.-USSR GENERAL AGREEMENT ON CONTACTS, EXCHANGES AND COOPERATION. DURING VISITS TO THREE MAJOR REPUBLICS OF THE SOVIET UNION (THE RSFSR, THE UKRAINE, AND UZBEKISTAN), THE DELEGATION MET WITH GOVERNMENTAL LEADERS AND DISCUSSED LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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ISSUES OF MUTUAL CONCERN AND RESPONSIBILITY. THE

GOVERNORS' OVERALL IMPRESSION OF THE VISIT AND THE EXCHANGE PROGRAM IN GENERAL WAS VERY POSITIVE. THEY WERE ESPECIALLY IMPRESSED BY THEIR MEETING WITH PODGORNYY (REFTEL). END SUMMARY.

2. THE DELEGATION VISITED MOSCOW, KIEV, TASHKENT, SAMARKAND AND LENINGRAD WHERE THEY MET FORMALLY AND SOMETIMES INFORMALLY WITH GOVERNMENTAL OFFICIALS. MEETINGS WITH THE THREE REPUBLIC COUNCIL OF MINISTERS CHAIRMEN--SOLOMENTSEV (WHO IS A CANDIDATE MEMBER OF THE POLITBURO) IN MOSCOW, LYASHKO IN KIEV AND KHUDAYBERDYEV IN TASHKENT--WERE STRUCTURED SESSIONS IN WHICH THE HOSTS DELIVERED LENGTHY PREPARED SPEECHES FILLED WITH ECONOMIC STATISTICS, OFTEN LEAVING INSUFFICIENT TIME FOR THE GOVERNORS TO POSE MEANINGFUL QUESTIONS. DURING A FEW OF THE LESS FORMAL ACTIVITIES, AND WHILE TOURING SOME OF THE STANDARD TOURIST ATTRACTIONS, THE GOVERNORS TOOK THE OPPORTUNITY TO EXCHANGE VIEWS WITH LOWER LEVEL SOVIET OFFICIALS AND CITIZENS AND OBTAINED SOME UNFILTERED INFORMATION. THIS GAVE THEM THE OPPORTUNITY TO ANALYZE MORE ACCURATELY THE DATA THEY WERE RECEIVING OFFICIALLY.

3. IN ALL THREE MEETINGS WITH THE REPUBLIC LEADERS, LEVELS OF AGRICULTURAL AND INDUSTRIAL PRODUCTION WERE THE PRIMARY SUBJECTS. THE GOVERNORS MADE SEVERAL ATTEMPTS TO ELICIT FROM THEIR HOSTS INFORMATION ON SOVIET ADMINISTRATIVE TECHNIQUES AND ON WAYS TO COPE WITH PROBLEMS OF LARGE CITIES, BUT THESE EFFORTS WERE MOSTLY IN VAIN. CHAIRMAN LYASHKO IN KIEV, PERHAPS BECAUSE OF HIS OUTGOING PERSONALITY, WAS THE ONLY HOST WHO DEVELOPED A SEMBALANCE OF RAPPORT WITH THE GROUP, AND DURING THE RELATIVELY LAVISH FORMAL DINNER HE HOSTED, A GENUINE GIVE-AND-TAKE BETWEEN THE TWO SIDES TOOK PLACE. ON THE OTHER HAND, SOLOMENTSEV AND KHUDAYBERDYEV (WHO ARE INTELLIGENT, WELL-INFORMED AND HARD-NOSED PARTY LINERS) WOULD NOT GO MUCH BEYOND THE POSITIONS CONTAINED IN THEIR PREPARED STATEMENTS.

4. THE JEWISH EMIGRATION ISSUE AROSE ONLY DURING LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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DISCUSSIONS ON THE FIRST TWO DAYS OF THE DELEGATION'S VISIT. SOLOMENTSEV GAVE THE STANDARD SOVIET LINE ON THE QUESTION, AND THIS WAS REPEATED THE FOLLOWING DAY AT THE INSTITUTE OF SOVIET-AMERICAN RELATIONS. SEVERAL GOVERNORS FRANKLY SAID THAT THE SOVIET POSITION WAS LESS THAN CONVINCING AND THAT THE SOVIET GOVERNMENT SHOULD BE MORE FORTHRIGHT IN EXPLAINING ITS POLICY. PRAVDA COMMENTATOR YURI ZHUKOV DID NOT APPRECIATE THESE

BOSERVATIONS AND WLAKED OUT OF THE LATTER MEETING.
(WHILE IN MOSCOW, A FEW OF THE GOVERNORS MET WITH JEWISH
ACTIVISTS, BUT THE EMBASSY ESCORT OFFICER WAS NOT
PRESENT AT THESE MEETINGS.)

5. TREATMENT OF THE DELEGATION OF THE DELEGATION INDICATED THAT THE
SOVIETS CONSIDERED THE VISIT TO BE HIGHLY IMPROTANT.
THE HOSTS SPARED NO EXPENSE NOR EFFORT TO ENSURE
THAT WHAT WAS SEEN WAS THE BEST THE USSR HAD
TO OFFER. ACCOMMODATIONS WERE FIRST-CLASS OR BETTER AND
TRAVEL WAS BY AN IL-62 ESPECIALLY CONFIGURED FOR VIP
USE. IN RESPONSE TO SEVERAL GOVERNORMS' REQUESTS THAT
THEY BE SHOWN ELEMENTS OF THE "COMMON MAN'S" WAY OF
LIFE, SOVIET OFFICIALS STATED THAT THEY WANTED TO
DEMONSTRATE TO THE GOVERNORS THE PROGRESS THE USSR
THAT TO SHOW ANYTHING BUT THE BEST WOULD BE COUNTER-
PRODUCTIVE.

6. AL THE GOVERNORS EXPRESSED THE VIEW THAT THEY
WERE IMPRESSED BY THE VOERALL PROGRESS MADE BY
THIER HOST COUNTRY IN THE PERIOD SINCE WORLD WAR II.
AT THE SAME TIME, MANY SAID THE SOMETIMES GRUELING
SPEECHES AND THE SOVIET OBSESSION FOR ECONOMIC STATISTICS
WERE NEGATIVE FACTORS, ALBEIT ONES WHICH THE DELGATION
ACEEPTED AS INHERENT IN THE MODUS OPERANDI OF SOVIET
OFFICIALDOM ON SUCH OCCASIONS.

7. COMMENT: THE GENERAL VIEW OF THE MEMBERS OF THE
DELEGATION ON THE WORTH OF THIS AND SIMILAR VISITS
IN THE FUTURE WAS VERY POSITIVE. ALL ACKNOWLEDGED
THAT FEW, IF ANY, CONCEPTUAL BREAKTHROUGHS WERE
MADE, BUT THEY EMPHASIZED THAT THE OPPORTUNITY
PROVIDED BY THIS PROGRAM HAD ENABLED THEM TO GATHER
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INSIGHTS AND IMPRESSIONS WHICH WOULD PROVE INVALUABLE
IN THEIR FUTURE THINKING ABOUT U.S.-SOVIET RELATIONS.
DETAILED AIRGRAM FOLLOWS.
STOESSEL

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